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THE SPECTATOR VERITAS ET INTEGRITAS MDCCCXLVIII

The Spectator

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Publishing the Truth, From Good Motives and For Justifiable Ends

The experience of Jans at Hamilton

by Will Rampe '24
INVESTIGATIVE REPORTER

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

Jesse Gross '22, like many students, was excited when he opened his acceptance letter to Hamilton, but his excitement quickly turned into confusion when he realized he would not be admitted to Hamilton until January. Said Gross, "I saw the confetti and I was like oh I got in, then I was like ok I should probably read it and I was like January? What? I didn't even know that was an option." Gross is one of around forty students who are accepted to Hamilton each year and instructed that they will not be enrolled until January. These students are colloquially referred to as "Jans" and are united in an experience that is unique to the larger student body.

Interviews with Jans of all class years revealed some trends. Several Jans reported that there is a discrepancy between the way that Fall programs are advertised to students and the experiences that students have during the program. Second, January admits said they do not feel as welcome on campus when they arrive in the winter as admissions claims they will. And finally that the lack of need-blind status for January admits leads them being defined by harmful stereotypes.

Each year, approximately 40 to 45 students are admitted to Hamilton College through January Admission. January Admits, commonly referred to as "Jans," are students who arrive at Hamilton during the spring semester of their first-year, after spending their fall pursuing a credit or noncredit option of their choosing. The most common choice is the Arcadia London Program, but many Jans choose programs in other countries such as the SEA Semester for Environmental Studies and the School for Field Studies.

Arrival on Campus: Expectations vs. Reality

The arrival of 45 new students on campus in January offers students admitted in the Fall a chance to make new friends. A chance that students often take according to Vice President of Enrollment Monica Inzer, who told *The Spectator,* that "Hamilton's 'Jans' are an integral and vibrant part of our student body, and have historically been welcomed enthusiastically into the community each winter by their fall classmates and upper class counterparts."

Some January admits who spoke with *The Spectator* characterized their experiences in a different light. George Diebel '23 said, "[the admissions office] led us to believe that we would be not only welcomed to campus, but extremely welcomed to campus. We'd be the new interesting people, and that it would be easier for us to meet new people. While everyone was open, there was still some stigma against Jans that the administration didn't prepare us for. Everyone had their friend groups already...It felt like we were kind of butting our way into campus."

Dylan Tarzian '24 also felt that socially, admissions' vision was not entirely accurate for his experience. He explains, "When I came to Hamilton I felt as if I didn't know as much about the school as I should have. I think this school is very academically challenging, but the main concerns for me were the social aspects. What I expected socially was not the same as reality."

Tarzian, who arrived on campus in Feb. 2021 recognized that COVID regulations played a role in this lack of social interaction, but also blamed admissions for these troubles, "I would love to give them the benefit of the doubt, but I think there were some aspects not shared. Because of COVID it was hard for us to see the direction that the Jan program was going in, and I felt I was left in the dark." Tarzian told *The Spectator* that "If I had the choice to do it again, I would've waited or tried to come in during the Fall, or even taken a gap year altogether."

In contrast, Gross felt that there was nothing wrong with admissions' advertisement of January admissions, "I would say there was nothing dishonest about what they told me. It all went exactly how I pictured it would go."

Natalie Guterman '25, a Jan currently in London, heard from older Jans "not to be naive and to know that it is challenging to come back to campus where the freshman class has already had the whole semester to bond. But I'm hoping that [by] joining clubs, sports and even just classes, you meet new people."

Alexia Assimakopoulous '22 echoed a similar sentiment, "I had a tough transition the first month, but I realized that I wasn't the only one who was struggling. I wasn't the only [Jan] who didn't have everything figured out." Assimikopoulous put a positive spin on the experience, however, saying "A lot of people probably faced a weird transition anyways [in the fall], it's just that I went through it a semester later due to being a Jan."

Some Jans tend to find their place on the hill eventually. Assimakopoulous said that joining the crew team provided a quick way to make friends. Assimakopoulos "went through rush and joined a sorority, and made tons of new friends that way."

The London Program

Several Jans reported that the academic rigor of the London program ill-prepared them for classes at Hamilton. In 2018, 35 out of 45 Jans participated in the London Program, while 10 students "worked, traveled, or chose to pursue other educational opportunities," according to a *Spectator* article written at the time. Although the courses Jans take in London are

automatically denoted as pass/fail, the academic sufficiency of these programs is ensured by Inzer. "Each of these programs has been vetted by our Off-Campus Study office to ensure the academic rigor and experiential program is on par with what Hamilton would want and expect for our first-year students."

Maya Mathews '23 said regarding the classes at Arcadia, "It was so easy, I don't think I studied ever and I only wrote papers at night." Guterman, who is currently in London, echoes this sentiment, "I definitely have heard a lot of stuff from past Jans that when you come to Hamilton it's a lot of work and sort of kicks your butt since I've heard Arcadia is a little bit easy."

These Jans said, however, that the academic ease of Arcadia does not take away from its value as a program overall. In fact, what it lacks in rigor it makes up for in experientialism. Mathews said "I had a wonderful experience, I spent my weekends traveling and it was amazing." Diebel expressed a similar sentiment when he stated, "It was awesome, I couldn't have asked for a better experience. I personally enjoyed traveling to see my family in Bristol and Rural England. This allowed me to see all of England."

The value of being in London goes beyond the academics and extracurricular experiences for these students. Guterman said "I do feel like it's preparing me for Hamilton. Even the responsibility for grocery shopping, the switch in balancing being an adult and living and taking care of yourself."

Experiences with the Arcadia program are not uniform. Especially for the Class of 2024, whose Fall experiences were affected by COVID regulations. Tarzian decided not to travel to London during this time. Instead, he participated in the Arcadia London Program through Zoom. "The classes were different because I was taking them from my bedroom and they were only about two hours a day with minimal homework. I didn't find myself doing much. Overall it was fine, I don't know if I'd call it a good experience, but it was just a matter of playing the hand I was dealt," he explained.

When asked if his fall experience prepared him either academically or socially for Hamilton, Tarzian claimed, "It was very hard to pay attention on Zoom. "I felt that I was understimulated academically compared to the workload I have now. I didn't make any friends directly from the online experience, I started making friends once I actually got to campus."

The effects of COVID-19 on Jans's fall experiences is not limited to the Class of 2024. Although the Class of 2025's Jans can experience London at its fullest this semester, the Jans in London are still required to wear masks while in class, and the uncertainty of travel during this time impacted how some viewed this opportunity. Guterman explained this when asked how COVID-19 affected her decision to go to London, "I would say maybe, since when I first got the decision I wasn't sure if traveling was going to even be an option, and if I wasn't able to be a part of a program with other Hamilton students I wasn't sure it was something that I wanted to do."

Need-Aware Admissions

According to the Arcadia London Center website, the Arcadia London Program costs $59,160. Students participating in this program are ineligible for financial aid from Hamilton in the Fall "because they are not yet enrolled [at Hamilton]," according to Inzer. Inzer told *The Spectator*, that "some of our partner programs offer financial assistance in varying degrees, and students seeking financial aid have been creative in assembling and creating fall experiences that not only fit with their academic and personal goals, but also with their family's budget."

The Admission's office is need-aware for January Admits, meaning that their financial situations are known to admissions while they make their decisions on whether or not to defer students to January admission. Hamilton is need-blind in nearly every other context. Inzer wrote in a 2018 Letter to the Editor published in *The Spectator,* "Our financial aid budget is extremely generous (roughly $40 million this year), but it is not limitless. Thus, Hamilton is not need-blind in admission decisions for our Jans."

The Spectator discussed this issue in 2018 with an article titled, "January Admits Not Granted Need Blind Admission," which stated, "Although 36 percent of the Class of 2021 identify as students of color or international students (many of which are Canadian), only 15 percent of this year's Jans identify similarly; 72 percent identify as white."

As *The Spectator* mentions in the 2018 article, the need aware policy "gives administrators the power to choose students partially based upon financial situation, effectively damaging the prospects of students whose families cannot pay full tuition, room and board, and fees attendance; such fees currently total $66,170."

This phenomenon has, according to Jans *The Spectator* spoke with, created a stereotype amongst the larger student body about Jans. As Diebel explained, "I heard that students on campus thought Jans were 'rich white and dumb,' like that was the stigma. I know that my fellow Jans also heard the same thing, so much so that when people were trying to make new friends they would not mention that they were Jans so people didn't think differently of them."

Alexia Assimakopoulous '22 echoed this sentiment: "There's the stereotype on campus that Jans are not as smart as other students because of their January admission students and then there is also another stereotype that Jans are partiers because the London program is notoriously light on work and heavy on freetime."

"There's the stereotype on campus that Jans are not as smart as other students because of their January admission students...The Jan name is often dragged through the mud... and that made me feel really shitty about identifying myself as a Jan."

The Spectator requested statistics from Monica Inzer on the demographic information of January admits but received no response on the matter. However, a resource called the Common Data Set (CDS) is available to the public, with statistics on many colleges in the U.S., including SAT scores, GPAs, diversity and financial aid. As Inzer mentions in a *U.S. News* article titled "How to Find Admissions Statistics for College," "the Common Data Set offers a chance to explore college data in an unvarnished and consistent way." However, as mentioned in the article, the CDS offers "only a fraction of the information."

The Spectator analyzed the CDS for the 2020-2021 academic year at Hamilton, yet there is no specific data in the document referring to January Admits. The CDS instructs that Hamilton "Provide numbers of undergraduate students for [each racial/ethic category] as of the institution's official fall reporting date of as of October 15, 2021." Reports from this date do not include January Admits who are not officially enrolled at Hamilton at the time. Because of how this data is reported, the 2018 *Spectator* article notes, "These statistics make the student body appear more culturally diverse than it actually is."

Conflicting Feelings Upon Acceptance

Jans, like any other student, are excited to be admitted. This initial excitement leads to hesitation for many Jans when they first receive the news that they will join the rest of their classmates in January. "I actually applied to not be a Jan. I'm pretty sure I clicked the no to January button. When I got the news it definitely complicated my decision," explained Guterman.

Despite this confusion, January admission is not an accidental or arbitrary phenomenon. Colleges

PHOTO BY ARCADIA ABROAD

The front of the building at the Arcadia London Center.

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Dear Hamilton students,

After this week's issue, *The Spectator* will only print twice more this semester, as the last two issues of Fall 2021 are coming out on December 2 and December 9. If anyone from the Hamilton community is interested in submitting a Letter to the Editor before the end of the semester, please submit letters by 10:00 p.m. on either Monday, November 29 (for the December 2 issue) or Monday, December 6 (for the December 9 issue).

Since we are not printing next week, we want to extend our best wishes for Thanksgiving recess. We hope that everyone has a relaxing break and safe travels to and from Hamilton.

Best,
Cole and Emma Mae

The Spectator

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The Spectator's Letter to the Editor section is designed to be a forum for the entire Hamilton community to discuss and debate campus, local, national, and global issues. Pieces published in the section express the opinion of the individual writers and are not necessarily the opinions of *The Spectator*, its editors or the Media Board.

Letters to the Editor are welcome from all students, alumni/ae, faculty, friends of the college, and Hamilton community members.

The Spectator has the following policies for submission:

1. Submissions are due by 10:00 p.m. on the Monday before publication. The editors reserve the right to refuse any late submissions.
2. Letters should be no longer than 500 words. The editors reserve the right to cut off letters at 500 words.
3. Letters submitted anonymously will not be printed.
4. *The Spectator* reserves the right not to publish any letter it deems inappropriate for publication.
5. If a piece is determined to be libelous, an unwarranted invasion of privacy, or an unnecessary and/or unwarranted ad hominem or personal attack, it will not be published.

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About Us

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commonly deploy this option to fill empty slots in the Spring, a time when students often study abroad. In a 2013 *New York Times* piece on January admission, Scott G. Chrysler Jr, a college counselor in Louisiana, puts the logic of January admission in simple terms "An empty seat is not generating any income."

Inzer explained Hamilton's process for choosing Jans by saying, "Hamilton's January admits are students for whom we run out of fall spots but would love to see in our community. They are admitted because of their tremendous academic potential and compelling personal qualities, but also because of their strong interest in Hamilton, demonstrated independence and intellectual curiosity that lead us to believe they might embrace this opportunity and make good use of their fall semester."

Many Jans desired a common introduction to college, did not understand what set them apart from other admitted students and initially felt dejected by the news that they were January admits. "I was a bit turned away from Hamilton and the Jan program because it wasn't traditional," Mathews explained. "I didn't ask to be a Jan, I was very surprised when I opened my acceptance letter and saw that I was accepted for January. At first I was upset. I was blindsided and didn't know what to think. It was different and took me about two weeks or so to accept it and start looking into what Hamilton had to offer for Jans," said Diebel.

Initial reactions vary when faced with this opportunity. Gross expressed excitement after learning of this decision, "Pretty quickly I was pretty psyched [for it to be] January because I realized I could get credit for doing something [else] and seven semesters on campus is plenty of time." Inzer acknowledged the discrepancy between the admissions office's vision for Jans and their personal worries, "January admission may not be ideal for all who are offered this option, but it is a full offer of admission (unlike a spot on Hamilton's wait list, by contrast) and, therefore, we do not encourage Jans to appeal the decision." For those who bind themselves to Hamilton by applying Early Decision, some leeway exists. As Inzer explains, "Early Decision candidates who are offered January admission are released from the binding ED agreement and have until May 1 to make their decision so that they have time to compare our offer to more traditional acceptances they might receive."

Alternative Fall Experiences: From Ecuador to Cambodia

Hamilton College's January Admissions Explained page claims, "Hamilton 'Jans' have done virtually anything and everything in the fall, from community service and travel to outdoor adventures and full-time work."

Faced with the uncertainty of COVID regulations, Brogan Deem-Ranzetta '24 exemplified the diversity of Jan adventures during the fall. When asked what he did during the fall of his first-year, Brogan stated, "I did a bunch of different things; first I did an online internship which lasted a couple weeks. I looked at different marine environments based in Greece, and made reports on the information. I also traveled to the Galapagos Islands and Puerto Rico with two different programs called Projects Abroad and Global Works. There I did some community service work such as working at a turtle sanctuary, cleaning beaches and rebuilding a house for a family who lost theirs in a hurricane. I also got to explore the islands with the people in my group."

Although he did not receive college credit, Deem-Ranzetta still felt that his experiences with these programs were valuable. When asked whether he felt his fall experiences prepared him for coming to Hamilton, Deem-Ranzetta responded, "Definitely. It was my first time traveling abroad alone and I gained a lot of independence. I felt a lot more confident as a result, [as] having to improvise in different situations and meet new people made me feel a lot better about myself. I definitely think I changed as a person in a really positive way."

Gross had a similarly positive experience with his program. As he explained, "I participated in the School for Field Studies in Cambodia; I had a great experience, it was a college program for environmental studies and biology majors, and so the main focus was field work. We looked at insect taxonomy in the northern region, my focus was weevils and I ended up catching two specimens of this insect that hadn't been caught since 1909."

Despite having a positive experience with his program, Gross felt that he was somewhat excluded by the rest of the Jans once he came to Hamilton since he did not go to London. Regarding this he stated, "I would say I was not really a part of the Jan group, because the Jans sort of form their own identity as a London group...I wasn't really prepared for what college social life is." Gross also responded positively when asked if his fall experience prepared him to come to Hamilton,"I felt prepared for Hamilton, I felt the program was rigorous and I actually felt that when I took my first bio class here that it was below a lot of what I had to do there."

While Jans seem to enjoy their fall experiences whether in London or another program, there is certainly a struggle that comes with arriving at Hamilton in January that is ill-mentioned by admissions. As Diebel explains, "While everyone was open, there was still some stigma against Jans that the administration didn't prepare us for. Everyone had their friend groups already, but admissions said that things would be different. It felt like we were kind of butting our way into campus, and admissions made it seem like things would be easier."

Arboretum Speaker Series to host lecture

by Anoushka Aswin '25
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

An upcoming speaker series surrounding Hamilton's arboretum will begin on Saturday, Nov. 20 at 10:00 a.m. A lesser-known fact about the College is that its campus is an arboretum that spans 400 acres of land. Its origins begin in 1850 with the Root Glen, which contains over 65 species of trees and a diverse array of flowers and other plants.

Hamilton Arboretum states its aim is "to provide visitors with a broader understanding of the campus landscape and promote long-term stewardship of the environment." The Arboretum Speaker Series seeks to fulfill this purpose by bringing important speakers to the College to discuss climate change, local ecosystems and sustainability. Available as both virtual or in-person events, students, faculty and members of the public are invited to attend any of these sessions for free.

In the past, Hamilton attests that this series has "drawn many from the local community." It has consisted of five to six speakers throughout the winter and spring months, pulling distinguished scholars from all across the country. The theme of many of these past events will be continued in the presentations scheduled for this year. The central topic is an informative discussion of unique nature facts and details about maintaining diverse ecosystems.

The first event is titled: "How Might Our Forests Change in Response to Climate Change? One Clue is Their History." In his speech, Dr. Neil Pederson, an ecologist affiliated with the Harvard Forest at Harvard University, will be talking about how tree-ring analysis is used to predict trends in ecology and the climate. This event is particularly relevant to college students in a time when climate change activism is largely being supported by young adults.

There will be at least four other events taking place in this academic year, the last of which will be in April 2022. Also included in the series is "Power Up Garden Beauty, Power Down Garden Maintenance," which focuses on tricks and tips for creating a beautiful garden. The third event, "Sustainable Management of Forest Products" will discuss forest biodiversity and the forest products industry. "Bluebirds - and More" analyzes the history of the bluebird as well as the history of other important wildlife found in an arboretum. The final event, "Preserving Your Trees," will be a presentation on landscape design in urban settings. To find out more about these events, visit the Hamilton website page on the arboretum series.

This series is one of many steps Hamilton takes to contribute to sustainability and conservation efforts. Hamilton places emphasis on its mission to mitigate climate change through student research, a Sustainability Working Group and environmentally-friendly

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facilities. Hamilton has also taken a Climate Commitment for the College to be carbon neutral by 2050. To achieve this goal, former Hamilton President Joan Hinde Stewart created a Climate Action Plan in 2009. This plan includes many steps for the college to achieve its carbon emission goals, and the Arboretum plays an important role in this. The action plan states that by "integrating sustainability through community outreach and education, the Hamilton College Arboretum promotes environmental stewardship on and off campus."

Arboretums are important because of their educational value and their work to conserve natural resources. However, Hamilton's arboretum holds a fascinating amount of monetary value as well. According to Hamilton, "a 14 inch maple tree provides an overall financial benefit of $113 per year, or $48,700 for the Arboretum's 431 maples. Extrapolated to the 2,281 trees across all of the Arboretum's tree species, that's nearly $258,000 per year in financial benefit to Hamilton College." Given the many benefits the arboretum provides to Hamilton, it is clear that maintaining this environment is necessary. However, Hamilton's arboretum is in need of membership and donations to further its goals.

Hamilton's Arboretum is meant to be a ground for environmental education and connection with the local community. The Arboretum encourages students to attend its upcoming series to learn more about sustainability efforts, fun facts and important information about the local environment, as the series can bring awareness to Hamilton's status as an arboretum and give it the much-needed support required to maintain its growing ecosystem.

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

The Root Glen holds a significant amount of trees that our campus protects.

Common Ground returns after hiatus

by Brian Seiter '23
STAFF WRITER

On Tuesday, Oct. 26, College President David Whippman announced that the Common Ground Series, which was postponed amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, will be returning to the hill on Monday, Nov. 15 at 7:30 p.m. in the Wellin Hall.

The Common Ground series began in 2017 with the aim of bringing prominent speakers to campus with differing views on important contemporary issues in order to facilitate and model a productive dialogue. These conversations seek to find the "common ground" amidst the ideological and political gaps between the two speakers. The Hamilton website states that "Common Ground is a forum where speakers discuss contemporary issues and model respectful dialogue from different perspectives." Concerning the goals and mission of Common Ground, President Wippman said "our objective was for speakers to model the kind of respectful dialogue across political boundaries that should occur more often on campuses and in society."

To pursue this aim in past years, Hamilton College has invited numerous speakers to campus from various political and ideological backgrounds to have discussions, debates, and discourse regarding important issues such as impeachment and midterm elections. The series has featured speakers such as Condoleezza Rice, Marc Elias '90, Jim Messina, Reince Priebus and David Axelrod.

The upcoming installment of the Common Ground series will be a panel discussion between two prominent economists and policy makers, Christina Romer of University of California Berkely and Gregory Mankiw of Harvard University, about income inequality and its causes, consequences and policy. The moderator of this event will be Professor Ann Owen, who is the Henry Platt Bristol Professor of Economics at Hamilton College and a former economist for the Federal Reserve Board of Governors.

These two economists stand on opposite sides of the American political schism but also have very similar backgrounds and fields of expertise. Romer is a liberal professor of economics at Berkeley and a former chair of the Council of Economic Advisors in the Obama Administration. On the other hand, Mankiew is a conservative economist, a former republican and current independent, a professor of economics at Harvard University and the former chair of the Council of Economic Advisers during the George W. Bush administration.

Professor Owen spoke to *The Spectator* about this upcoming event and her role as the moderator. Regarding the event and its speakers, Owen stated that "I think that the event scheduled for next Monday, Nov. 15 is a good opportunity for our students. Both speakers have been involved in economic policy-making in prominent roles and are well-respected economists. Because the speakers are experts on US economic policy, the discussion will revolve around these issues in the US." In terms of her role as moderator, Owen stated that "I see my role as moderator as one in which I will try to guide the speakers to talk not just about their own views but also about the sources of any disagreement they might have."

It is important to note that the Common Ground series is not and has not been devoid of controversy during its relatively short time on the Hill. Many students and faculty stand in opposition and disagreement with the series, and specifically whether finding common ground is possible or worthwhile.

Reflective of another type of view, in 2017, Associate Professor of Africana Studies Nigel Westmaas wrote to *The Spectator* in a Letter to the Editor stating, "I have serious disagreement with the general thrust and trajectory of the principle of "common ground" or "both sides" in the current U.S. context." In this same article, Westmaas stated that, despite the good intentions of the event, there is too much at stake in the current context of the country for an "elusive search for a fanciful, polite, common ground."

Professor Owen and President Wippman spoke about these controversies and their opinions on them. Owens stated that her "intent is to just facilitate conversation on an important topic between two people who have relevant experience to offer. I think that has value, regardless of what we call it or what other events have been in a series with the same name." Wippman echoed similar sentiments, saying, "I have emphasized on many occasions that part of a student's education here lies precisely in exploring new ideas and new ways of thinking and in getting to know people with different identities, backgrounds, and perspectives...we learn more when we are open to new ideas and consider other perspectives, even if we find those ideas and perspectives uncomfortable."

Disabled Students Network conducts audits

by **Deanna Durben '25**
STAFF WRITER

The Disabled Students Network (DSN) is currently conducting a series of accessibility audits on all academic buildings, dining halls, a selection of residence halls and important student centers like Sadove Student Center and the Days-Massolo Center.

"By and large, people agree that there's an accessibility issue on campus, but saying that isn't a quantitative thing that we can complain about, or a list of things we can fix," said Helen Ziobrowski '24, a DSN E-board member. She explained that the audit's main goal was to "compile some concrete data" on accessibility issues on campus so that specific problems and potential solutions can be brought up to the administration. The audits are being conducted using an Americans with Disabilities Act checklist, but the goal is not to nitpick the exact measurement of each door, or raise questions of legality (which certain historic buildings can actually get around). It is about making campus better.

The DSN formed teams of two or three people for this task. Ziobrowski and fellow E-board member Katherine Rao '24 audited the Taylor Science Center. They spent some time examining the automatic doors at the entryway, imagining navigating it with a wheelchair. After pressing the button for the inner door, would there be enough time to wheel backwards so as to not be whacked in the face as they opened? After some back and forth, the two noted it down for future consideration.

Although the Science Center was built after the ADA (and thus technically up to code), the main problem the DSN aims to address is whether the building is actually accessible to physically disabled or vision impaired people. The proper braille signage and raised numbers were present on office doors (and ticked off on the DSN's Google Sheets checklist), but the various half-flights of stairs were frustrating to navigate, even with the elevator. Many aspects of the building were technically compliant but really lacking in forethought and accessibility.

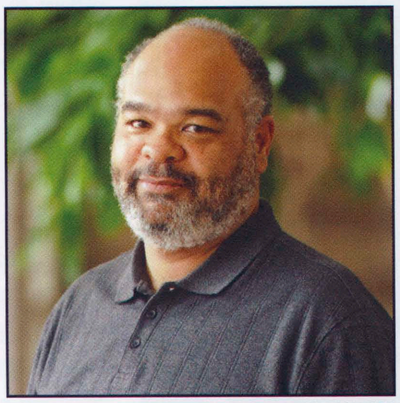


PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

Assistant Dean Allen Harrison helped found the DSN.

One striking example is that there are no ramps in either the Kennedy Auditorium or the Red Pit (in the Kirner-Johnson Building). "You can get into the classroom and sit in the back, but you can't go down and present if you're in a wheelchair," Ziobrowski said. What does that imply about the College's attitudes towards disabled people, she and Rao wondered, exchanging meaningful looks.

Even worse, students find themselves blocked from dining halls. To get into McEwen without climbing a flight of stairs, students normally have to go to KJ, take the elevator to the second floor and enter through the back entrance. However, that door has been locked in recent weeks, so it is impossible to enter. Sure, there are other dining options, but it is not always feasible to go far out of your way, nor should anyone have to. These issues do not only affect disabled students, as injuries happen all the time on campus. People might argue that changes are unnecessary because so few people demand it, but Hamilton will never be truly inclusive or be able to attract and welcome students with those needs without making changes.

"Any space that you aren't physically able to access represents conversations and interactions that you also can't access. It's not just the space itself. It's the dialogue, the things that you're learning in those spaces," Ziobrowski said. "If you're here in a wheelchair or have mobility issues, it makes campus so much smaller than it already is."

A big issue that disabled students face on campus is the feeling of isolation. Since most students are not visibly disabled, it is easy to feel alone in their struggles. Ziobrowski says that the DSN is helping: "It's been really cool finding out that other people have had similar experiences. I thought that I was the only one. It's also really exciting to see how many people are showing up to these advocacy meetings because there's so much more support for it then I thought there would be."

Eleanna Sorensen '23 conceived of the DSN over the summer when she reached out to students via Assistant Dean of Students for International Students and Accessibility Allen Harrison. The DSN has been holding weekly meetings, but it had not been approved as an official club until recently, so public interest meetings will be held soon. The plan is to hold two types of meetings: advocacy and social.

The advocacy campaign has already started with the accessibility audits. A poster campaign is also planned to draw attention to various places that are not accessible, especially the easily overlooked ones like hard-to-use doorknobs and entrances. After examining all the buildings, the DSN will compile the data and bring it to the attention of various administrators and departments, from Residential Life (dorm-related concerns) to Facilities Management (icy and inaccessible paths).

A peer mentor program is also in the works, in which experienced students would help others advocate with professors and ask for accommodations. The accommodations office is severely understaffed, and the process can be extremely confusing and overwhelming, especially for new students. Having mentors familiar with the administration and its procedures would give students a big boost in navigating these processes. Peer mentors would meet with students beforehand to discuss potential types of accommodations and offer ideas. They could sit in on meetings with Dean Harrison or professors to offer reassurance and support, or help draft important emails.

Once the club is more established, Ziobrowski will likely lead the social meetings, which will be structured as casual dinners and conversations. She hopes that having a safe space for students to share their stories will provide everyone with a sense of community. "We won't ever ask you to disclose your disability or anything like that, it's just a space to feel comfortable and be around people with similar experiences," she explained. These meetings will not be exclusive to disabled students; they will be open to everyone who is interested in making campus better.

PHOTO BY ERIC MOSS '24

The handicap door push button outside of the entrance of the Sadove Student Center is faded from use.

November 11, 2021

Hamilton Horoscopes

by **Mariam Saied '23**
Resident Astrologist

Jan. 20-Feb. 18: Aquarius
February 19-March 20: Pisces
March 21-April 19: Aries
April 20-May 20: Taurus
May 21-June 20: Gemini
June 21-July 22: Cancer
July 23-August 22: Leo
August 23-Sept. 22: Virgo
Sept. 23-Oct. 22: Libra
Oct.23-Nov. 21: Scorpio
Nov. 22-Dec. 21: Sagittarius
Dec. 22-Jan. 19: Capricorn

Aries

This week you might find yourself reexamining one of your close relationships. With Mars in Scorpio, in your house of intensity, clashing with Saturn in Aquarius, in your house of community, it's inevitable to see one of your friends in a new light (for better or worse). Everything is not what it seems, especially with so much Scorpio and Pisces energy in the sky!

Taurus

I won't lie, it might be a confusing time for you, Taurus. The Mars-Saturn square is pulling you in the direction of work, but the Mercury-Mars conjunction, in your house of partnerships, is pulling you in the direction of romance. Work is important, but cuffing season is approaching! It might be worth it to think about what you want right now.

Gemini

Take a deep breath. With a Mercury-Saturn square making it difficult to focus on and execute tasks, and a Mercury-Uranus opposition bringing you unpleasant surprises, you're in for a wild ride! Just remember that sometimes plans fall through or old wounds come to the surface, and that's all okay! Let yourself slow down every once in a while.

Cancer

Get ready for a pleasure-filled week, Cancer! With Mercury forming a conjunction with Mars, in your house of pleasure, it's an ideal time to be a little more adventurous. Put your phone on Do Not Disturb and see what the world has in store for you.

Leo

A word of advice: hold your tongue. With a Mercury-Mars square on the horizon, your family life might get a bit strained. Don't give them the satisfaction of lashing out. Instead, reinvent your spiritual side when the Sun in Scorpio forms a trine with Neptune in Pisces. Nothing like an end-of-year rebrand!

Virgo

Of course, in true Virgo fashion, this week is all about the details. Your communication house is being lit on fire this week, and it's clashing particularly with your homey house of routine. Take extra care of your professional interactions and please, please don't fall asleep at work. I'm begging!

Libra

Money, money, money! Mars and Saturn are having a playdate this week, and they've got your house of finance right in the middle of it. You might need some time to recharge from last week's intense sociability, but make sure to take a deep breath before you dive into any new projects.

Scorpio

Boundaries might be a bit of an issue this week. If someone in your life is cutting it a little too close, try to let it go or table it for a day or two before confronting them. Instead, focus on the flirty energy brought on by the Sun in your sign interacting harmoniously with Neptune in Pisces. Shoot your shot bestie. I triple dog dare you.

Sagittarius

You love to talk, as all fire signs do, but this week might pose some challenges for you in that area. You may come across situations where you can't get a word in. When that's the case, take a step back and reflect as opposed to getting angry. Reflect on yourself and reflect on those around you.

Capricorn

This is an equalizer week for you, Cap! Your friends and finances clash in not so great ways, so it'll be important to take some time to yourself and, if not, keep things fair when it comes to monetary and emotional expenses.

Aquarius

Your work life balance could very well be in shambles this week. With Mercury square Saturn in your sign, your work life is pushing the limits you've set for it. Remember to set boundaries and say "no" when you need to. It's not the end of the world to say "no," I promise.

Pisces

This week is a mixed bag for you, Pisces! On the one hand, it's important to go against your idealistic nature and be a bit skeptical of things that seem too good to be true (or even just good enough). On the other hand, the harmony between the Sun and Neptune means the sky's the limit for you!

Welcome Imam Facchine!

by **Anna Hoover '25**
Contributing Writer

Tom Facchine joined the Hamilton community to serve as imam on campus earlier this year. He has been an imam at Utica Masjid (Muslim Community Association of Mohawk Valley) since Aug. 2020.

Originally, Imam Facchine is from Camden County, New Jersey, and he graduated from Vassar College in 2011. While at Vassar, he studied abroad in Istanbul, Turkey, which was an integral part of his introduction to Islam.

Imam Facchine was raised Christian, growing up primarily in the Presbyterian church, but also having experience in the Catholic church. As he grew up, Facchine moved away from the church and eventually became an atheist. After studying in Turkey, he learned more about Islam, and began praying and fasting in the Islamic tradition. He later applied and was accepted to an Islamic seminary in Saudi Arabia.

Almost six years later, he returned to the United States and began working with the Muslim Community Association of Mohawk Valley where he aims to build bridges with other religious organizations and educational institutions. From there, he met with the staff at the Hamilton chaplaincy office and began his work here at the college.

At Hamilton, Facchine says it his responsibility to add value to the experience of the Muslim community here on campus "whether it be spiritual counseling, religious instruction or just a friend to talk to who has similar experiences as a Muslim person navigating a secular liberal arts college." He also connects Muslims at Hamilton with those in nearby Utica. He works to make sure the dining halls accommodate Muslim dietary restrictions, and he advocates for the Muslim community at Hamilton whenever possible. Facchine is also a resource who can convey and clarify Islamic beliefs and practice, as well as "be a support, a smiling face and a sympathetic ear to everyone."

Facchine describes the Muslim and religious communities on campus as "very genuine and conscientious." He cites the chaplaincy staff as a crucial part of campus life who can help assist student wellness and help students explore things like meaning, purpose and satisfaction.

Imam Tom's door is always open! Chat with him at:
Office hours at the Azel Backus house on Thursdays from 4:00 to 5:00 p.m., Weekly Muslim Student Association dinners on Fridays at 7:00 p.m., All Beliefs Union discussions on Thursdays at 5:30 p.m., Monthly Inter-religious Roundtables, or via email at txfacchi@hamilton.edu.

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

November 11, 2021

Study Abroad St. Andrews: a plant-based diet in the birthplace of haggis

by Caroline Boyd '23
Contributing Writer

As I waved goodbye to my parents at the airport, donning my hiking backpack and KN95 mask, I was prepared for a semester full of surprises. I knew my year abroad would throw challenges at me that I would not be able to anticipate (with the uncertainty of COVID-19 as the cherry on top) and I was certainly correct.

I have spent hours on the phone with various customer service representatives from my UK cellular service provider, endured unexpected days of quarantine, lost my credit card and retraced my steps to find it amid pre-sliced mangoes in a Tesco refrigerator, and had to figure out how to use public transportation to get to the Isle of Skye when my train to Inverness was cancelled last minute.

While I had to tackle each of these unexpected challenges as they arose, I have yet to face the one challenge I had been banking on encountering since I decided to come to St Andrews: being a vegetarian in a country whose signature dish is sheep organs minced with spices and stuffed into the animal's stomach.

I had been warned: meat, potatoes and beer sustain the Scottish. It is true that hearty food is imperative to keep warm and raise spirits when things get cold, grey and blustery here. However, the honor of hosting the climate conference COP26 has pushed Scotland to lead the UK into a culture of plant-based and sustainable eating. Now those hearty Scottish culinary staples are largely vegetarian friendly.

Scotland had been preparing for COP26 long before I arrived in Sept. 2021. Everywhere you turn, you can find signage stamped with the conference's official seal providing tips on saving carbon. Menus around the small town of St. Andrews highlight the lowest carbon selection. The university's dining halls serve vegetarian haggis every morning, and I have yet to see them serve the meaty original. Cafés do not charge an extra fifty pence for plant-based milk in your cappuccino. It is the norm to walk or cycle rather than drive the mile to get around town. Furthermore, restaurants and cafés stress the importance of their ingredients being locally sourced. I even noticed signage for the conference in the Key Botanical Gardens in London — climate change communication is as common in the UK as street signs and corner pubs.

Eating a plant-based diet combats climate change on several levels. Reducing meat consumption represents one of the most important individual actions one can take to minimize personal carbon footprints. Meat consumption leads to increased levels of the greenhouse gases like carbon dioxide and methane in the atmosphere. Raising animals for slaughter strips bare land that could otherwise be used for organic plant-based agriculture or carbon sequestration via reforestation. The overbreeding of farm animals also releases unsustainable amounts of methane into the atmosphere. Though one person altering their eating habits hardly minimizes global greenhouse gas emissions, a cultural shift toward plant-based diets, such as the one emerging in Scotland, could encourage the sustainable repurposing of land. The trend could even spread to the rest of the world — I noticed similar plant-based initiatives in London, the total opposite end of the UK. Establishing a plant-based culture could be crucial as nations collaborate to create a cooler future with net-zero emissions.

Travel sites, food blogs and estimations of vegetarians per capita reveal that, surprisingly, the UK is one of the most vegetarian-friendly nations in the world; the US ranks fairly low in comparison.

I have been in the UK for two months now and have been able to explore the local culinary scene and scout out some favorite sustainable markets and restaurants.

Balgove Larder is situated on a farm about a mile away from the town of St. Andrews. To get there, you must walk down a dirt road flanked by fields dotted with fluffy white sheep and beds of the season's vegetables. Balgove offers a café, a more formal restaurant, a flower shop and a marketplace where you can buy fresh baked goods, produce and (yes) locally sourced cuts of meat. Their mission is to encourage sustainable eating by offering a variety of delicious vegetarian choices and ensuring that the meat they do sell is sourced within a few miles of St Andrews.

Brewdog, a chain of pubs scattered across the UK, advertises Vegan Mondays and displays the number of kilograms of carbon dioxide produced in the making of each menu item, encouraging diners to opt for the most carbon-friendly option. Brewdog markets itself similarly to any American sports bar, serving up beer, burgers, wings and fries (sorry, chips), but also boasts a half plant-based menu.

"Lovers of all things plant-based will be spoilt for choice as half of our menu is vegan or vegetarian," the pub chain's website reads. I am usually not one for vegan imitation meat products, but I tried Brewdog's vegan chicken wings and enjoyed every bite. I felt like I was a part of the whole pub experience and did not have to sacrifice the fun of having a bite with my pint due to being vegetarian. Brewdog works to normalize eating plant-based and include vegetarians and vegans in the pub eats scene.

I have also noticed that cafés and restaurants in St. Andrews and Edinburgh will strategically place vegetarian options higher up on menus, prioritizing plant based options by presenting them to diners before the meaty options. Menu engineers encourage placing items you want to sell at the top or center of the page, which is exactly where many restaurants around town place their plant-based menu items. My culinary experience in Scotland has been exciting and eye-opening. I continue to try new and wonderful foods. I have found the home of my favorite sandwich in the whole world — shoutout to the Roma sandwich at Rocca Italian Deli. I came in expecting to eat mashed potatoes and mushy peas for breakfast, lunch and dinner every day, but discovered a flourishing culinary scene of delicious roasted seasonal vegetables, rich and decadent desserts, and deviously greasy, salty and chunky chips. St. Andrews has normalized plant-based culture, and I hope the world leaders here for COP26 will bring this new passion for sustainable eating back to their home nations.

PHOTO BY CAROLINE BOYD '23

PHOTO BY CAROLINE BOYD '23

November 11, 2021

Why and how does someone choose to care about global politics?

by Tinashe Manguwa '25
OPINION CONTRIBUTOR

A while back, I found myself in a discussion around abortion rights in Texas. The U.S. Supreme Court had just announced its ban on abortions after six weeks of pregnancy and lobbied citizens to sue those who aid and abet them. The consensus in my discussion was that this was abhorrent and women should have control over their bodies. I had an understanding of the issue from social media.

Regardless of my prior knowledge, I decided to be provocative and asked: "What's going on in Texas?" Enter the expected condescending gasps and exasperated countenances. Someone responded: "How can you not know what's happening in Texas? You have to."

I have since wondered why I supposedly "have to." Why is it important I know about this state and what is happening there? Why do I have to be so well-versed in American politics when very few exhibit cognizance of my own country, Zimbabwe, or care for African affairs? Am I not just a puppet to some exploitative scheme in doing so? There is no denying that a core tenet of imperialism is forcibly hammering perverted ideologies into anyone and everyone, with disregard for the importance of one's indigenous and chosen lifestyle. By foregoing my own identity in order to check the boxes of being knowledgeable as per contemporary American standards on this college campus, I play directly into this trap. Many of us do.

Justice—if we are bold enough to believe such a thing exists on this campus—operates in tandem with geopolitics. Nations like the United States stand at the top of this oppressional ladder. I have known this for some time now; I have only recently acquired the language for it, and I continue to do so. At Hamilton, there is little room for the institutionalized subaltern in lectures and event structures. It is clear that most programming is meant to target a specific audience, one rooted in 'whiteness' or 'white ideals' around capitalist intent and manipulation. Even that which is led by or centred around the marginalized often merely serves to assuage white do-gooder interest.

In theory, many of us know this already. Very few of us are on the receiving brunt of oppression because the majority of us benefit from it. Does thriving in this space mean being knowledgeable about the latest gossip in some village in West Dakota or beef between donkeys and elephants? In doing so, we somehow believe we can fight skewed governmental strata. We feel as if it is wise to go for the head in order to dismantle systems of inequality and injustice, but it is also foolish to negate the power of the body. Perhaps in tackling issues on the ground, we inch closer to toppling oppressive empires as a whole.

As a community, at what level does our caring begin and end? We are yet to truly decide whether we are only compassionate toward the familiar, or if anything else makes us uncomfortable and unwilling. We have no substantive dialectics over whether an atrocity or where it happens is more important to us, for if we are to be honest, there are some things happening in parts of the world that, if they happened here, would elicit outrage. So what is stopping us then from being as infuriated? Perhaps America is so deeply rooted in its freedom gospel that every other country only occupies the margins. Or maybe we simply do not care, and *even that* assumes our caring is needed or necessary.

The reason I ask so many questions is because we find the answers we seek in them, and sometimes, those answers do not come neatly packaged in clear signs or sentences. Sometimes, they are messy, or breed more uncomfortable questions, yet they always require a contemplation that challenges our perverted views around what is normative and non-native.

I find myself in a unique position because I happen to be physically present in this place and I cannot ignore its ignorance. Some have said I am lucky to be here and I should be grateful or that I need to adapt, but in being another statistic that only fulfills some set diversity quota, there is little space to exercise gratitude in a place so negligent of my plight and those in similar positions. It is fatiguing to give credence to an environment that will not reciprocate. One of my high school teachers had this Arundhati Roy quote etched in her heart: "There's really no such thing as the 'voiceless'. There are only the deliberately silenced, or the preferably unheard." I refuse to give voice to that which will not even recognize my own.

It is vital that we have discourse around rights violations and what needs to be done. That becomes the stepping stone for the change toward which we hunger. If there is anything happening in Texas or any other place and I have the capacity to help, I would be delighted to; let us not, however, allow our personal biases to drive our desire for positive societal impact. Rather, as we converse, let us pay attention to who and what is driving our thoughts, speech and actions.

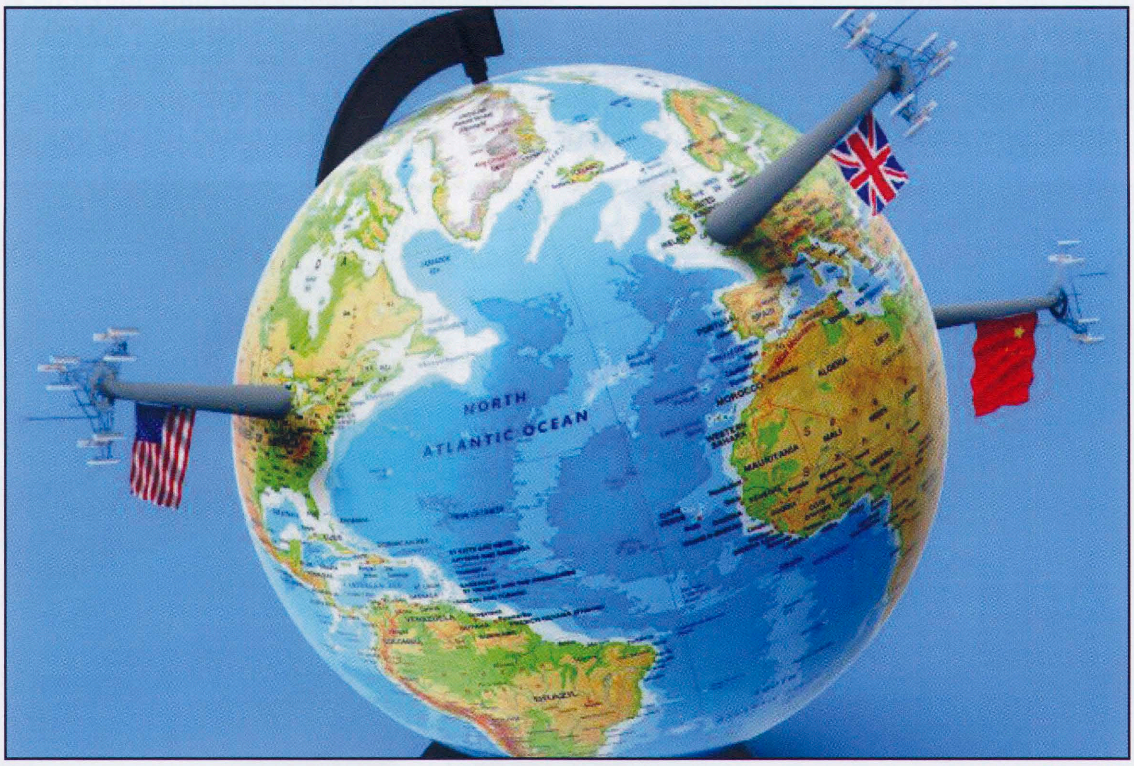


PHOTO BY FUTURES PLATFORM

Why do I have to be so well-versed in American politics when very few exhibit cognizance of my own country, Zimbabwe, or care for African affairs?

November 11, 2021

Hamilton Theatre Department presents: Anne Washburn's *10 out of 12*

by Lily Rizzoli '24
A&E EDITOR

It has been so long since we have been able to gather in the theatre together and watch the lights dim for a stage production, but on Thursday, Nov. 4 at 7:30 p.m., many members of the Hamilton community did just that and were greeted with an amazing experience. The opening night of Hamilton College's production *10 out of 12*, written by Anne Washburn and directed by Professor Craig Latrell, was a smooth success and a welcome reentry into the experience of live theatre.

The show gave audience members a completely immersive experience. Upon entering the Romano Theatre—a black-box style theatre built in 2014—audience members were shocked to find that a much smaller theatre had been constructed within the Romano. Amongst the bleachers for the audience, there were three cluttered desks with what looked like sound and light controls. Once the audience had taken their seats, they were prompted to put on provided headphones. Light tropical music played from these headphones, which the audience enjoyed as they mingled with those around them and waited for the show to begin.

Soon enough, voices came through the headphones, informing the audience that the play would be the story of a production's tech rehearsal and all that goes into preparing a production for its opening night. Once the play truly began, actors slowly filled the aforementioned desks cluttered with technology, playing tech members of the in-play production. These pseudo-tech members, as well as the pseudo-crew constructing the stage, all wore headphones with mics and used them to communicate with each other, and the audience heard all of their dialogue from their own headsets. The audience was then immediately pulled into the world of the show, hearing minute details of behind-the-scenes happenings, including the set designer searching for an exact-o knife, the stage manager growing angry when she could not locate actors and the hilarious director—who had an extreme battle with a theatre exit light—picking apart any production detail he could find. The actors who played the actors in the fictional show each had their own individual quirks and were extremely entertaining, exemplifying the stress and annoyance of a tech rehearsal when no one is properly prepared.

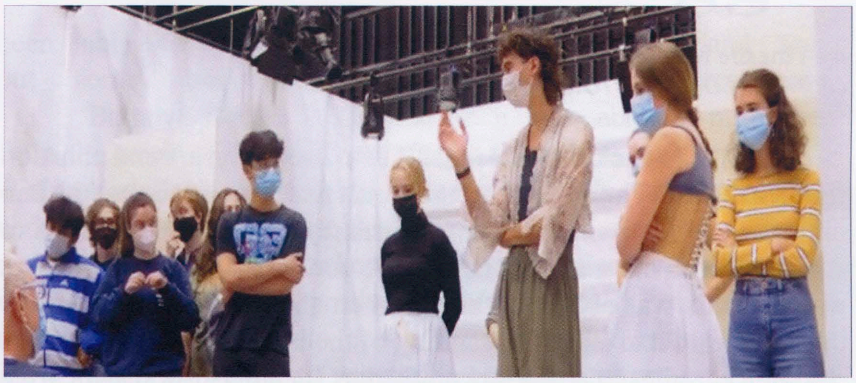


PHOTO BY ZACK STANEK

The Theatre Department in a rehearsal for *10 out of 12.*

While the actors showcased their performance talents in the fictional theatre, the characters of the director, assistant director and costume designer played their roles from the audience bleachers. Like the audience, these characters watched the tech rehearsal unfold before them, but these characters alone had the privilege of leaving their seats to interact with the characters onstage. The audience watched two storylines unfold: the tech rehearsal and the characters' personal lives, and the story of the fictional play rehearsed by every character in the actual play.

The narrative was not the only complex element of *10 out of 12*; the physical makings of the production itself were extremely intricate. Its set included many doors, spinning walls and props, while its light design was just as elaborate, featuring multiple colors, blacklights and floodlights. In addition, the sound effects established an other-worldly atmosphere, which contributed to the feeling that the audience was intruding on an intimate production.

10 out of 12 was an amazing theatrical experience and was well-welcomed after a long hiatus from live performance. The cast and crew of Hamilton students performed beautifully with such a difficult piece. For those who missed the first showings, there is still time to watch this show, as there are performances for it on Nov. 12, and 13. Students can purchase discounted tickets online!

PHOTO BY THE HAMILTON THEATRE DEPARTMENT

The Hamilton Theatre Department's official poster for Anne Washburn's *10 of 12.*

Review: Yodapez presents *Yodaplay*

by Christina Stoll '25
A&E CONTRIBUTOR

On Thursday, Nov. 4, Hamilton's resident improv group Yodapez performed *Yodaplay*, a long-form interactive show that diverged from their typical short-form productions. Yodaplay is a two-act, improvised play full of quirky characters and soap opera-worthy plot points. The group hosted their performance in the List Center, utilizing the room's windows for their iconically chaotic introduction.

The Pezzers made their grand entrance by taking pictures of their waiting audience through the windows of the performance room and then bursting into the actual room itself, cheering and screaming with their audience. After both Yodapez and the audience settled, Yodapez member Maggie Mcdow '23 explained that the show's concept was a family drama. She then revealed a whiteboard with a family tree of various roles to be filled, including a Theytriarch, a Pool Boy, a Butler, a set of Twins and various couples.

To create the play's base storyline, Yodapez members asked their audience for suggestions about the family's last name, a reason for a family reunion and a special secret object. Once the members collectively chose the last name Cullen, a funeral and a grandfather clock from various audience responses, they then moved on to choose the specific roles in the play's family. For this section, Yodapez prepared ahead of time; long before the show started, they had written every role on a different white t-shirt.

Each Pezzer had to randomly select one of these shirts to choose their respective role. Once all the shirts were picked, the play was finally ready to begin.

The play opened with the Pool Boy, who established that she was working for the Cullens, a rich family whose matriarch had recently died. From then on, the storyline grew increasingly complex as the characters spontaneously developed the play with each other. Whenever a scene seemed to be coming to a close, a Pezzer on the sideline clapped their hands, signaling an abrupt transition to a different location. This kept the pace of the show rapid, a tactic that not only added to the chaotically hilarious atmosphere, but also kept their audience fully entertained and engaged.

As the plot progressed, the characters revealed that the recently deceased matriarch's will was never verified. This plot point was where the Pezzers truly started to lean into melodrama and comedy. The death of the matriarch and the promise of a generous inheritance spawned various embezzlement schemes, forgery, theft and a particularly memorable incident with a venomous snake that killed the family's Pool Boy.

Performing an undeniably random show filled with plot twists and good laughs, the Pezzers kept themselves and the audience on their toes throughout the dramedy. Each performer displayed the full extent of their acting range in various ways, including adopting accents, catchphrases and mannerisms to better communicate their character's personality. As always, the Yodapez performance was a hilarious break from classes supplemented by their connection to each other and the audience.

Review: *Babysitter Bloodbath* (2013)

by Jason Le '23
A&E STAFF WRITER

John Carpenter's *Halloween* (1978) is an iconic film that began the golden age of slasher films with boogeymen slaughtering teenagers, including *Nightmare on Elm Street* (1984) and *Friday the 13th* (1980). Of course, with every good horror film, a mediocre game adaptation is made (typically on the Atari). However, as a rare fan-inspired first, Puppet Combo's Playstation 2 themed *Babysitter Bloodbath* (2013) revisits *Halloween* and does the spooky story justice.

The player takes on the role of Sarah, a last minute babysitter hired to watch over the young Billy while his parents are out for the evening. Suddenly, the phone rings and a mysterious caller speaks an ominously incomprehensive gibberish. In typical 80s teenager fashion, Sarah responds by inviting a cute boy from the mall, Jack, for a late night hang with scary movies and love. But before things get scandalous, the couple hears a strange noise outside the house. After a brief investigation, Jack is brutally murdered by mental asylum escapee, Neokalus Burr. Shortly afterwards, the power goes out and the killer begins his hunt. With almost no tools or weapons, the player must now evade Burr for as long as possible to escape.

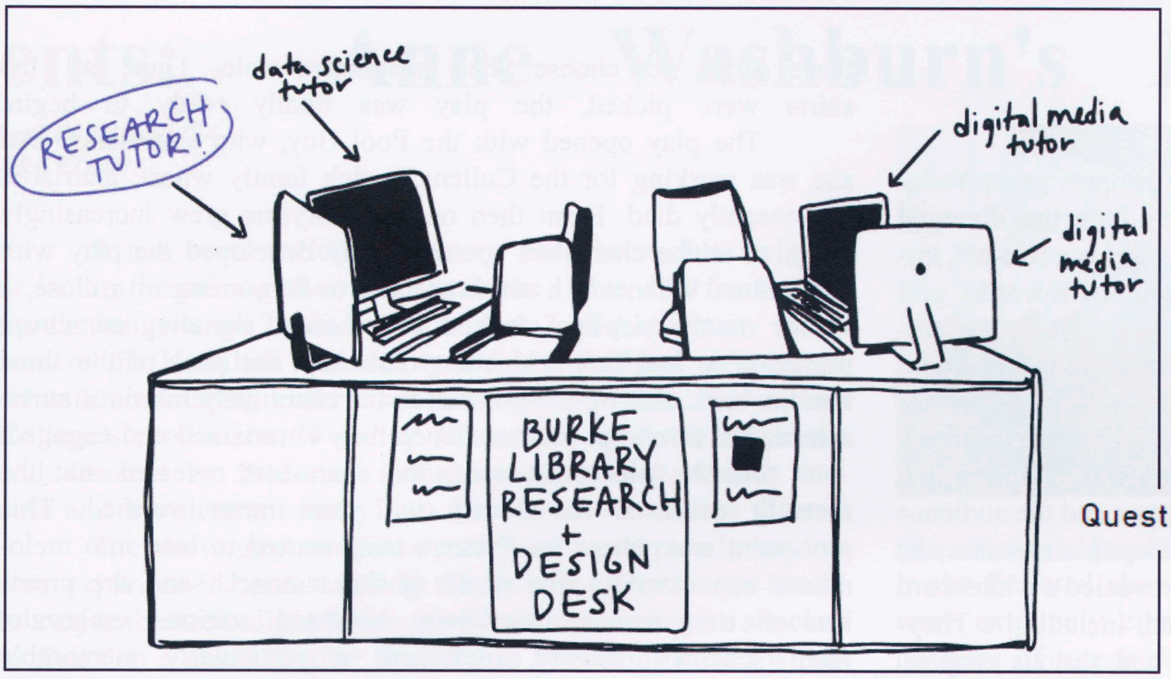
Babysitter Bloodbath is a fairly short indie game developed by Puppet Combo, formerly known as Pig Farmer Productions. Puppet Combo is well known in the indie gaming community for developing retro games that range from walking home alone at night, doing laundry in the shadiest part of town or working the night shift at a local gas station. However, what made Puppet Combo memorable was *Babysitter Bloodbath*. With a straightforward and familiar, slasher film-inspired plot and basic PS2 style gameplay, the game serves as a good scare and shot of nostalgia for any casual gamer, and a worthwhile experience for any *Halloween* fan.

Unique to *Babysitter Bloodbath* is the early 90s classic video game aesthetic which Puppet Combo heavily embraces. From the Carpenter inspired piano chords, VHS themed navigation menu, blocky characters and items, cheap animations and eerie ambience, *Babysitter Bloodbath* reimagines *Halloween* to the playstation era the Atari version failed to do. Although the retro-themed style is notably different from 21st century horror games, *Babysitter Bloodbath* is able to approach horror just as well. As a matter of fact, what made Carpenter's *Halloween*, and even the Silent Hill series, a success was the atmosphere of walking amongst the unknown it created.

Combining a first and third person perspective, resembling games such as *Silent Hill, Clock Tower 2* or modern day horror games, this game ends up coming off as terrifying. Like the early *Silent Hill* games, there is comfort wandering around with a third-person perspective, as seeing everything keeps you safe. However, once the game transitions into a first-person perspective, your obscured vision makes you feel as if you are being watched. One minute, you are chasing Billy down the hall; suddenly, you are forced to hide and wander the halls, evading a deranged killer that might just be stalking you from around the corner.

If you are looking for a quick horror game or are simply a huge *Halloween* fan, *Babysitter Bloodbath* is worth a shot! This game is available for Windows for $2.95 USD on itch.io. The boogeyman is just around the corner. Can you escape?

LITS RESEARCH & DESIGN DESK



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Athlete Spotlight: Kelcie Zarle '22

by Sam Dils '22
SPORTS EDITOR

The winter sports season has arrived, and the women's basketball team will be the first to compete with a weekend doubleheader against SUNY Oneonta and St. John Fisher on Friday Nov. 12th and Saturday Nov. 13th. *The Spectator* sat down with one of the captains of the women's basketball team, senior point guard Kelcie Zarle. Zarle is the team's leading scorer among returning players, averaging 13.3 points per game, while shooting an impressive 38.7% from three-point range during the 2019-20 season. 2019-20 was a major step in the right direction for Coach Mo Green's squad; in just her second year at the helm, a 15-10 overall and 5-5 NESCAC record was good enough to tie for fourth in the conference. Due to tiebreakers, the team earned the sixth-seed in the NESCAC Tournament and fell to a top-five nationally ranked opponent in Bowdoin. The team is hoping to continue its upward trajectory into another competitive NESCAC Season.

How are the energy and emotions around the team heading into your first season in two years?

We definitely have some great energy as we head into our first season in two years. Our team is super young—8 of our 15 have never played in a college game—so a lot of that energy is definitely nervous but there is also a ton of excitement to start the season. The team is definitely very different from previous years, so I am excited to see how we grow throughout the year and continue to get better. Personally, I am super excited to hit the ground running and finally play in an actual game again. It has definitely been a while, but being able to lace up the shoes one more time this season is definitely an honor and I am trying to value every minute of this year!

As a senior captain, what do you hope to bring to the team both on and off the court?

As a senior captain, I am really just hoping to get the team to buy into the program and to build off of what we were able to do two years ago. We have a lot of potential to be good, but we need to make sure everyone has "flipped their switch" like Coach Mo says so that we can really come together and achieve something great this year. I have a lot of faith in our team and I know my co-captains Claire Sehring '22 and Emma Sehring '23 and I are really working to make sure all of our underclassmen are focused and working hard day in and day out, but also enjoying every second on the hardwood. Off the court, we are hoping to continue to build our great team chemistry and make sure everyone is having as great of an experience as we have had here on the Hill.

The team seems to have a good balance of returners and new players. What has it been like adjusting to the new roster?

We definitely do have a nice balance of returners and new players this year, mainly because last year our now-sophomores did not have a normal season, so this will be the first time they suit up for games and wear the H on their chest with any sort of pressure. With any team, there always seems to be an adjustment period at the start of the season, so we have definitely experienced that so far, but I can already see improvement from the first couple weeks of practice. I think the coaches are definitely trying to put the puzzle pieces together and put us in the best position to win so I am excited to see the adjustments we continue to make throughout the season!

With two home games against Oneonta and St. John Fisher to start the season, what are your expectations for this first weekend of games?

Because I do not really know what to expect since our starting lineup is completely different from previous years, I think my expectations for the first weekend of games is to almost figure it out as we go. I think these first couple games will really be telling of what areas we need to improve and what areas we can continue to excel in. I expect that everyone will go out there and work hard and have fun because after all it is our first game in two years, so I want everyone to value every moment and hopefully come away with two wins!

Does the team have any big goals for the season?

As always, I think our team goal is to make it to the NESCAC tournament and hopefully win it all. For the seniors and myself especially, that would be an amazing way to end our basketball careers here at Hamilton and it would definitely be an honor to help lead the team there as best as I can.

PHOTO BY HAMILTON COLLEGE

Kelcie Zarle '22 and the women's basketball team tip off their season this weekend.

Lightning Round

Best team tradition?

Our best team tradition is definitely the senior poems and speeches that we do at the end of the year banquet. They are usually super meaningful and clever so it is always fun to see what the underclassmen come up with.

Any personal superstitions before games?

I just have to put my uniform, socks and shoes on in a specific order (left foot first). I also like to make a dance before every game and record it and then put all of the pregame dances together in a video at the end of the season. An alumni, Carly O'Hern '20 used to eat a single sour patch kid before every game so I might do that as well to keep the tradition alive.

Go-to gameday meal?

Pesto pasta from Olive Garden or a banana and peanut butter—no in between.

Teammate with a secret talent?

Lauren Kuster '23 plays the violin for the orchestra here at Hamilton, and Maria Mercado '25 is also a stellar juggler.

Song/artist on your personal pregame playlist?

Definitely Chelsea Cutler and Kesha!

November 11, 2021

Where does serve-and-volley stand in tennis?

by Owen Lewis '24
SPORTS EDITOR

Tennis has come a long way over the years. In 1980, a long point with sharply angled shots and players racing around practically the entire court would seem impossible, yet today points like this are played in every match. Since court surfaces changed, racket technology evolved, and nutrition and fitness improved, tennis modernized. Today's players are fitter, stronger and faster than their 20th century counterparts.

A tactic that many players practically left for dead is serving and volleying. This maneuver consists of racing up to the net after hitting a serve to strike the next shot before it bounces (hitting a ball out of the air is called a volley). From close to the net, a few angles open up that are not conceivable from the baseline (where a player serves from to start a point), some 39 feet back from the net. The problem is that successfully serving and volleying is somewhat contingent on the return being weak—a bullet near either sideline or low enough to force an awkward volley can rarely be poked away easily to end a point. With today's rackets, it is far easier to hit returns with sharp angles or extreme pace than it was 30 or 40 years ago, making serving and volleying a risky proposition. Not only that, in the late 1900s grass courts were notoriously uneven, resulting in many bad bounces that serve-and-volley became a viable strategy almost out of necessity: let the ball bounce at your own peril.

Serve-and-volley is used sporadically in today's game. A good enough serve can often lead to success, as can an unexpected charge to the net. But if a returner sees a server race up to the net, they are often able to pick a target and rip a return loaded with topspin that is nearly impossible to control with a volley.

There are many tennis traditionalists out there who believe serve-and-volley is still a viable tactic, beyond just coming to the net off good serves or at unexpected times. A recent example supported their theory. On Sunday, world number one Novak Djokovic served and volleyed 22 times in the final of the Rolex Paris Masters tournament, winning 19 points for his endeavors: a phenomenal success rate of 86%. Djokovic would win the match 4-6, 6-3, 6-3, with his serve-and-volleying a big reason for his victory. Craig O'Shannessy, a prominent strategy coach who writes analytical pieces for the ATP Tour website among other well-known publications, wrote an article after the final that argued that "the death of serve and volley in our sport is pure misconception" and referred to serve-and-volley's decreased use as a "delusional fallacy."

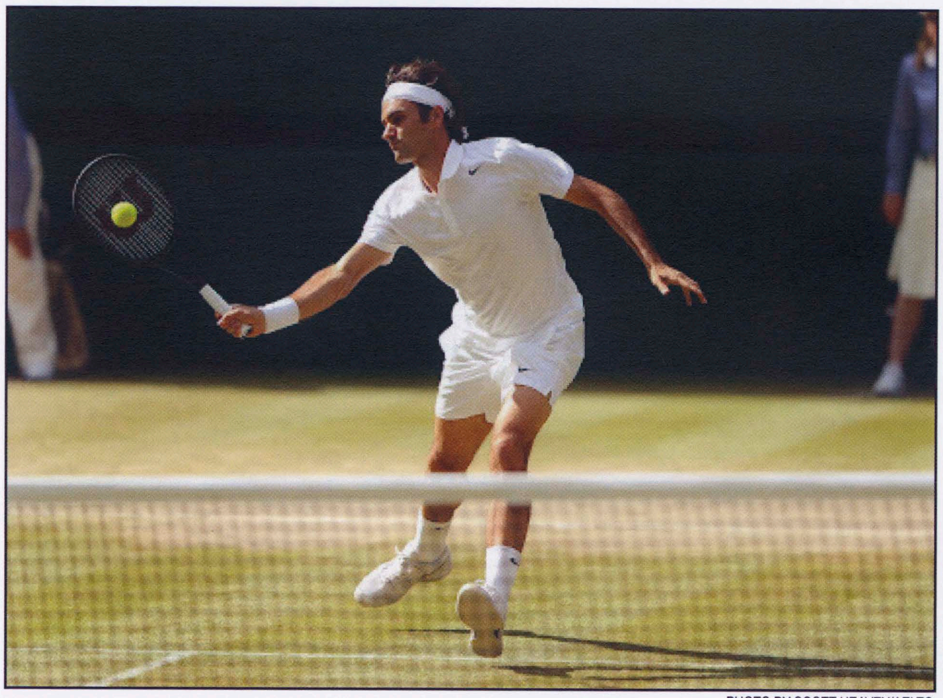

PHOTO BY SCOTT HEAVEY/AELTC

Roger Federer strikes a volley at the Wimbledon Championships.

PHOTO BY THIBAULT CAMUS/AP

Novak Djokovic celebrates his sixth title at the Paris Masters.

O'Shannessy knows tennis, and there is no denying that Djokovic's use of net play in the Paris final was a pivotal tactic. But to draw the conclusion that serving and volleying is still a consistently viable strategy in today's game is a stretch. It is important to note that the Paris final was a very particular matchup: Djokovic played Daniil Medvedev, who likes to play points from the back of the court and returns his opponents' aggressive shots without fail, resulting in them eventually making a frustrated error. Many of Medvedev's returns go down the middle of the court though, so opportune net play can result in some easy volleys that do not have to be hit on the stretch.

"Opportune net play" probably sums up Djokovic's tactics best: Djokovic has built a career playing similarly to the way Medvedev plays now, but at 34 years of age, endlessly sprinting and sliding from the baseline to keep points alive does not always work. So Djokovic learned to sneak into the net when necessary to cut a point short. Djokovic's net skills are far from revolutionary. Though a solid volleyer, Djokovic does not make eye-popping volleys like Roger Federer once did. But through coming to the net off good serves or approach shots, Djokovic can put himself in position to hit easy volleys.

Serve-and-volley still is not a sustainable, winning strategy; it's more of a supplemental tool that can be instrumental in getting out of jams. Few players return serves from as far behind the baseline as Medvedev, making it easier to get angles on returns that can defeat a net rush. The tactic will probably work at times, but drawing a sweeping conclusion that serve-and-volley is not, and has never been, overshadowed by more modern winning techniques is probably buoyed by the temptation of nostalgia. Despite O'Shannessy's correct observation that serve-and-volley was pivotal in the recent Paris final, Djokovic's execution of the strategy was risky and may not work as well in the future. Serve-and-volley may be a relic that can still occasionally be very useful, but it is a relic nonetheless.